

Utah Crash Summary 2004



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Introduction

- Purpose:** The Utah Crash Summary, produced annually, identifies and describes the trends and effects of traffic crashes in Utah. The statistics within the Utah Crash Summary describe factors that contribute to the occurrence of crashes, and crash-related injuries and fatalities. This report is designed to heighten awareness about traffic safety by allowing safety program specialists, public health personnel, and other interested individuals to identify areas where programs may be focused in an effort to reduce traffic-related injuries and fatalities.
- Crash Data:** The data for this summary is derived from Utah crash reports. These reports are completed by law enforcement officers throughout the state who collect data from crash scenes on public roadways. Information is collected when a crash involved injuries, fatalities, or at least \$1,000 property damage; when the jurisdiction in which the crash occurs requires it; or when the responding officer determines that a report is warranted.
- Crash reports are forwarded to the Utah Department of Transportation (UDOT) for central collection. UDOT reviews the crash report forms and enters the data into a database called the Crash Analysis Reporting System (CARS).
- Private Property Crashes:** Beginning in 1997, all private property crashes were excluded from CARS. Since private property crashes accounted for approximately 10% of crashes in previous years, the decrease in crashes since 1997 is due in part to the exclusion of private property crashes.
- Fatal Crashes:** Additional information is collected on fatal crashes and compiled into a separate database, the Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS). This database was used for the reporting of alcohol and other drug-related crashes and fatalities.
- Fact Sheets:** In order to provide information at a glance, each section of the crash summary is accompanied by a Utah Crash Fact Sheet. The fact sheets provide an overview of the section, and are useful when presenting information to others.
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Executive Summary

Measurable progress has been made to reduce motor vehicle crashes in Utah, with a steady decline in the injury and fatal crash rates since 1971. These reductions can be attributed to a variety of factors, including:

- Statewide and local traffic safety programs that have increased awareness of traffic safety issues;
- Legislation mandating seatbelt use, graduated driver licensing, and enhanced penalties for impaired driving;
- Aggressive media and enforcement programs targeting driver behavior;
- Improved engineering of roadway infrastructure;
- Advanced engineering to provide safer motor vehicles and improve crash survivability.

The personal and socioeconomic effect of motor vehicle crashes is a continuing concern in the state of Utah, with special focus on reducing the tragedy of injury and death. In 2004, Utah made notable progress in the following areas when compared to 2003:

- Utah experienced an 8% decrease in the rate of motor vehicle crash fatalities, marking a new all-time low;
- The percentage of children (aged 0 to 8 years) involved in crashes that were restrained in child safety seats increased 3% overall, 6% for children aged 2 to 4 years, and 9% for children aged 5 to 8 years;
- The percentage of fatal teenage-driver crashes dropped to 16%, marking a ten-year low.

As improvements are made and progress continues, traffic safety needs to remain a top priority in Utah. In Utah during 2004:

- Rural crashes were 5 times more likely to result in a fatality than crashes in urban areas;
- More than half (53%) of the persons killed in a crash were unbelted, and unbelted occupants were 31 times more likely to be killed in a crash than belted occupants;
- Utah experienced a 16% increase in the rate of motorcycle crashes.

The 2004 Utah Crash Summary contains further details regarding motor vehicle crashes in Utah. In addition, each section of this Crash Summary begins with a colorful and informative Utah Crash Fact Sheet that quickly summarizes the detailed information in the section.

The Utah Department of Public Safety's Highway Safety Office invites users of this Crash Summary to help promote motor vehicle safety in our communities. As a partner in the highway safety community, your assistance will make Utah a safer place to drive, walk and bicycle.

Utah Crash Clock 2004

In Utah during 2004:

- A motor vehicle crash occurred every 10 minutes.
- A person was injured in a crash every 18 minutes.
- A person was killed in a crash every 30 hours.
- An unbelted crash occupant was killed every 2 days.
- An alcohol or other drug-related crash occurred every 4 1/2 hours.
- A person was killed in an alcohol or other drug-related crash every 5 days.
- A teenage-driver crash occurred every 35 minutes.
- A person was killed in a teenage-driver crash every 5 days.
- A speed-related crash occurred every hour.
- A person was killed in a speed-related crash every 5 days.
- A motorcyclist was involved in a crash every 8 hours.
- A motorcyclist was killed in a crash every 12 days.
- A pedestrian was involved in a crash every 12 hours.
- A pedestrian was killed in a crash every 15 days.
- A bicyclist was involved in a crash every 12 1/2 hours.

